India's Self Denial

by Francois Gautier

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Why is it that Indians, particularly its elite - the intelligentsia, the journalists, the writers, the top bureaucrats, the diplomats - hold an image of themselves which is often negative, and have a tendency to run down their own country?

The self-perception that Indians have of themselves, is frequently detrimental to their self-confidence. This is particularly striking amongst Indian journalists, who always seem to look at India through a western prism and constantly appear to worry how the foreign press views India, how the foreign countries - particularly the United States of America - perceive India, what the Human Right agencies say about India... Thus, when one reads certain Indian magazines, one has the impression that they could be written by foreign journalists, because not only do they tend to look at India in a very critical manner, but often, there is nothing genuinely Indian in their contents, no references to India's past greatness, no attempts to put things in perspective through the prism of India's ancient wisdom. Therefore, most of the time, their editorial contents endeavour to explain the

present events affecting India, such as Ayodhya, or the problem of Kashmir, or the Christian missionaries' attempts at conversion of tribal Hindus, by taking a very small portion of the subcontinent's history - usually the most recent one - without trying to put these events in a broader focus, or attempting to revert back to India's long and ancient history. In a gist, one could say - although things have been changing in the late nineties - that there is hardly any self-pride amongst India's intellectual elite, because they are usually too busy running down their own country. It is done in a very brilliantly manner, it is true - because Indian journalists, writers, artists, high bureaucrats, are often intelligent, witty and talented people - but always with that western slant, as if India was afflicted by a permanent inferiority complex. One then has to try to analyse the underlying reasons of this negative self-perception that India has of herself, probe the unconscious impulses which give many Indians - Hindus, we should say, as the majority of India's intelligentsia are born Hindus - the habit of always depreciating their own culture and traditions.

1. The Theory of the Aryan Invasion

The first and foremost explanation for this inferiority complex could be the theorem of the Aryan invasion, which is still taken as the foundation stone of the History of India. According to this theory, which was actually devised in the 18th and 19th century by British linguists and archaeologists, who had a vested interest to prove the supremacy of their culture over the one of the subcontinent, the first inhabitants of India were good-natured, peaceful, dark-skinned shepherds, called the Dravidians. They were supposedly remarkable builders, witness the city of Mohenjo-Daro in Pakistani Sind, but had no culture to speak-off, no written texts, no proper script even. Then, around 1500 B.C., India is said to have been invaded by tribes called the Aryans : white-skinned, nomadic people, who originated somewhere in Ural, or the Caucasus. To the Aryans, are attributed Sanskrit, the Vedic - or Hindu religion, India's greatest spiritual texts, the Vedas, as well as a host of subsequent writings, the Upanishads, the Mahabharata, the Ramanaya, etc...

This was indeed a masterly stroke on the part of the British : thanks to the Aryan theory, they showed on the one hand that Indian civilisation was not that ancient and that it was posterior to the cultures which influenced the western world - Mesopotamia, Sumeria, or Babylon - and on the other hand, that whatever good things India had developed - Sanskrit, literature, or even its architecture, had been influenced by the

West. Thus, Sanskrit, instead of being the mother of all Indo-European languages, became just a branch of their huge family; thus, the religion of Zarathustra is said to have influenced Hinduism - as these Aryan tribes were believed to have transited through numerous countries, Persia being one, before reaching India - and not vice versa. In the same manner, many achievements were later attributed to the Greek invasion of Alexander the Great : scientific discoveries, mathematics, architecture etc. So ultimately, it was cleverly proved that nothing is Indian, nothing really great was created in India, it was always born out of different influences on the subcontinent.

To make this theory even more complicated, the British, who like other invaders before them had a tough time with the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas, implied that the Aryans drove the Dravidians southwards, where they are still today; and that to mark forever their social boundaries, these Aryans had devised the despicable caste system, whereby, they the priests and princes, ruled over the merchants and labourers... And thus English missionaries and later, American preachers, were able to convert tribes and low caste Hindus by telling them : " you, the aborigines, the tribals, the Harijans, were there in India before the Aryans; you are the original inhabitants of India, and you should discard Hinduism, the religion of these arrogant Aryans and embrace, Christianity, the true religion".

Thus was born the great Aryan invasion theory, of two civilisations, that of the low caste Dravidians and the high caste Aryans, always pitted against each other - which has endured, as it is still today being used by some Indian politicians - and has been enshrined in all history books - Western, and unfortunately also Indian. Thus were born wrong "nationalistic" movements, such as the Dravidian movement against Hindi and the much-maligned Brahmins, who actually represent today a minority, which is often underprivileged.... This Aryan invasion theory has also made India look westwards, instead of taking pride in its past and present achievements. It may also unconsciously be one of the reasons why there was at one time such great fascination for Sonia Gandhi, a White-Skinned-Westerner, who may have been unconsciously perceived as a true Aryan by the downtrodden Dravidians and a certain fringe of that Indian intelligentsia which is permanently affected by an inferiority complex towards the West. It may even have given a colour fixation to this country, where women will go to extremes to look "fair".

But today, this theory is being challenged more and more by new discoveries, both archaeological and linguistic. There are many such proofs, but two stand out : the discovery of the Saraswati river and the deciphering of the Indus seals. In the Rig Veda, the Ganges, India's sacred river, is only mentioned once, but the mythic Saraswati is praised on more than fifty occasions. Yet for a long time, the Saraswati river was considered a myth, until the American satellite Landstat

was able to photograph and map the bed of this magnificent river, which was nearly fourteen kilometres wide, took its source in the Himalayas, flowed through the states of Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan, before throwing itself in the sea near Bhrigukuccha, today called Broach. American archaeologist Mark Kenoyer was able to prove in 1991 that the majority of archaeological sites of the so-called Harappan (or Dravidian) civilisation were not situated on the ancient bed of the Indus river, as first thought, but on the Saraswati. Another archaeologist , Paul-Henri Francfort, Chief of a franco-american mission (Weiss, Courty, Weterstromm, Guichard, Senior, Meadow, Curnow), which studied the Saraswati region at the beginning of the nineties, found out why the Saraswati had 'disappeared' : " around 2200 B.C., he writes, an immense drought reduced the whole region to aridity and famine " (Evidence for Harappan irrigation system in Haryana and Rajasthan -Eastern Anthropologist 1992). Thus around this date, most inhabitants moved away from the Saraswati to settle on the banks of the Indus and Sutlej rivers.

According to official history, the Vedas were composed around 1500 BC, some even say 1200 BC. Yet, as we have seen, the Rig Veda, describes India as it was before the great drought which dried-up the Saraswati; which means in effect that the so-called Indus, or Harappan civilisation was a continuation of the Vedic epoch, which ended approximately when the Saraswati dried-up. Recently, the famous Indus seals, discovered on the site of Mohenja Daro and Harappa,

may have been deciphered by Dr Rajaram, a mathematician who worked at one time for the NASA and Dr Jha, a distinguished linguist. In the biased light of the Aryan invasion theory, these seals were presumed to be written in a Harappan (read Dravidian) script, although they had never been convincingly decoded. But Rajaram and Jha, using an ancient Vedic glossary, the Nighantu, found out that the script is of Sanskrit lineage, is read from left to right and does not use vowels (which like in Arabic, are 'guessed' according to the meaning of the whole sentence). In this way, they have been able to decipher so far 1500 and 2000 seals, or about half the known corpus. As the discovery of the Saraswati river, the decipherment of the Indus scripts also goes to prove that that the Harappan Civilization, of which the seals are a product, belonged to the latter part of the Vedic Age and had close connections with Vedantic works like the Sutras and the Upanishads. In this light, it becomes evident that not only there never was an Aryan invasion of India, but, as historian Konraad Elst writes, it could very well be that it was an Indian race which went westwards : " rather than Indo-Iranians on their way from South Russia to Iran and partly to India, these may as well be the Hitites, Kassites or Mitanni, on their way from India, via the Aral Lake area, to Anatolia, or Mesopotamia, where they show up in subsequent centuries" (Indigenous Indians).

2. An Image of Poverty

Another reason why Indians often exhibit a negative idea of themselves, may be because India is always associated in the world with poverty : Mother Teresa, Unicef, or Calcutta. This image has been reinforced by books such as the City of Joy, an international best-seller, which takes a little part of India - the Calcutta slums - and gives the impression to the naive and ignorant western readers, that it constitutes the whole of India. Another factor which reinforces the image of poverty is the tremendous fame which Mother Theresa enjoyed in her lifetime - and even after her death, as she is in the process of being made a saint. While it is true that Mother Theresa did a tremendous job in Calcutta, she never tried to counterbalance the very negative image of India that her name was carrying, with some praise for the country which had adopted her for fifty years. She could have spoken for instance about the great hospitality of Indians, or the open-mindedness of Hindu religion, which had allowed her to practise Christianity near one of the most sacred temples of the country, or even about the near worship which most Hindus showed for her.

It is true that there is a tremendous amount of poverty in India, and that many people can only afford one meal a day. But four things should be known. Firstly, that until the 18th century, in spite of the repeated Muslim invasions, India was known as one of the richest countries of the world, the land "of milk and

honey". You only have to read the numerous accounts of travellers from different countries, who all marvelled at India's prosperity. The second thing, is that all the great famines of India happened during the British time. Many historians, such as Frenchman Guy Deleury, have documented the economic rape of India by the British : "Industrially the British suffocated India , gradually strangling Indian industries whose finished products, textiles in particular, were of a quality unique in the world which has made them famous over the centuries. Instead they oriented Indian industries towards jute, cotton, tea, oil seeds, which they needed as raw materials for their home industries. They employed cheap labour for the enterprises while traditional artisans were perishing. India, which used to be a land of plenty, where milk and honey flowed started drying" (Modele Indou)... According to British records, one million Indians died of famine between 1800 and 1825, 4 million between 1825-1850, 5 million between 1850-1875 and 15 million between 1875-1900. Thus 25 million Indians died in 100 years ! The British must be proud of their bloody record. It is probably more honourable and straightforward to kill in the name of Allah, than in the guise of petty commercial interests and total disregard for the ways of a 5000 year civilisation. Thus, by the beginning of the 20th century, India was bled dry and there were no resources left.

The third fact, is that after Independence, whatever poverty there still was in this country, there were no more famines, as India managed to become

self-sufficient in food through the Green Revolution (whatever negative side effects it had on India's ecology - but that is another story). This is a great achievement, a tremendous task of which India can be proud off. For if you look at China, India's largest neighbour, which always invites natural comparison with India as they share many of the same problems and characteristics, it went through tremendous traumas after independence. Millions died of hunger, for instance, when Mao diverted peasants from cultivating the land, in his misguided and megalomaniac effort to increase steel production. It should also be said that later it did look as if China fared better than India in its effort to feed adequately its people. But that is because they employed coercion to control their own population, whereas India, a democracy, never tried to force its citizens to have less children - except for a short while under Indira Gandhi (who lost the elections shortly after).

The fourth thing is that there is a tremendous amount of black money in India - as much as 40 to 50% of the total economy. If that money could be tapped and channelled to the White economy, it would give a tremendous boost to the nation. But you need a government wise enough to enact laws which make people cheat less. People have been cheating since 1947, because Nehru had decided that Socialism, partly modelled after the Soviet Union, was the best tool to bridge the yawning gap between the very rich and the very poor of India. At that time, it seemed a good idea, but as years passed, it proved a disaster, spawning a

huge bureaucratic system, breeding corruption, stifling free enterprise and overall making people cheat, because it had introduced one of the heaviest taxing system in the world. And the sad thing is that Indians - from the middle class to even the poorer people - are some of the greatest savers in the world. Not for them the credit card system, which is ruining the West, by artificially enhancing the economy - no, they save in land, gold, jewellery, or in cash, often stashed at home. And that is a tremendous asset for India, if it could be brought in the open. There is nowadays an economic crisis in the so-called Tiger countries of Asia - even Hong-Kong is affected by it. But so far, India's economy has remained sound. Of course there are drawbacks: the Rupee is not yet fully convertible, subsidies drain the Exchequer, import duties are still levied on many goods... However this partially insulated economy has helped India to protect her own industries, while switching gradually to a fully liberalised financial system. Thus, if that tremendous amount of black money could be tapped, it would also contribute towards changing this "poor" image sticking to India, which is harming her in her quest for foreign investments and international recognition.

China too had a very negative image until the late sixties : the Red menace, the communist Dragon, the great Backward leap... But after Nixon's visit in 1971, everything changed - that is the Western Press, which was responsible in the first place for China's negative image, started projecting a more positive picture of China. It also helped, that contrary to Indians, the

Chinese are proud of themselves and possess a strong nationalistic bend - maybe because they have never been colonised, except for short periods. And today, there is not only a fascination for China in the West, but the Industrialised World has also placed many of its economic chips there. France, for instance, invests 10 times more in China than in India. Yet, India is a much more interesting country from the investment point of view : it is democratic, which China is not; people there speak more English than in China; it has laws to protect contracts, which is not the case in China; it is a stable country, in spite of the political problems and all kinds of separatist movements... But still, the world hardly takes notice of India - although things are beginning to change. And that is because of India's negative image, of course ! And nobody is more responsible about this negative image than Indians themselves. India has to stop going around with a begging bowl in her hands. For India does not have to beg : it has the material and intellectual wealth - it has even the monetary resources.

3. The Caste System

The caste system has been the most misunderstood, the most vilified aspect of Hindu society at the hands of Western scholars - and even today by "secular" Indians. And this has greatly contributed to India's self-depreciation, as you hardly find any Indian who is not ashamed of caste, especially if he talks to a Westerner. But ultimately, one must understand the original purpose behind the caste system, as spelt out by India's Great Sage and Avatar of the Modern Age, Sri Aurobindo : "Caste was originally an arrangement for the distribution of functions in society, just as much as class in Europe, but the principle on which this distribution was based was peculiar to India. A brahmin was a brahmin not by mere birth, but because he discharged the duty of preserving the spiritual and intellectual elevation of the race, and he had to cultivate the spiritual temperament and acquire the spiritual training which alone would qualify him for the task. The kshatriya was kshatriya not merely because he was the son of warriors and princes, but because he discharged the duty of protecting the country and preserving the high courage and manhood of action, and he had to cultivate the princely temperament and acquire the strong and lofty Samurai training which alone fitted him for his duties. So it was for the vaishya whose function was to amass wealth for the race and the shudra who discharged the humbler duties of service without which the other castes could not perform their share of labour for the common, good". (India's Rebirth, p 26).

It is true that in time the caste system has become perverted, as Sri Aurobindo also noted : "it is the nature of human institutions to degenerate; there is no doubt that the institution of caste degenerated. It ceased to be determined by spiritual qualifications which, once essential, have now come to be subordinate and even immaterial and is determined by the purely material tests of occupation and birth... By this change it has set itself against the fundamental tendency of Hinduism which is to insist on the spiritual and subordinate the material and thus lost most of its meaning. the spirit of caste arrogance, exclusiveness and superiority came to dominate it instead of the spirit of duty, and the change weakened the nation and helped to reduce us to our present condition...(India's Rebirth, p 27) Today, the abuses being done in the name of caste are often horrifying, specially to a Westerner brought up on more egalitarian values. Some of the backward villages of Tamil Nadu, or Bihar for instance, still segregate Harijans and the lower castes, who do not have the same access to educational facilities than the upper castes, in spite of Nehru's heavy-handed quota system, which has been badly taken advantage off.

Modern-day Indian politicians have exploited like nobody else the caste divide for their own selfish purposes. The politicians of ancient India were princes and kings belonging to the kshatriya caste; their duty was to serve the nation and high ideals were held in front of them by the brahmins and rishis who advised them. The Buddha's father for instance, was a king

elected by its own people. But today we see corrupt, inefficient men, who have forgotten that they are supposed to serve the nation first, who are only interested in minting the maximum money in the minimum time. Indian politicians have often become a caricature, which is made fun of by the whole country, adding to India's self-negating image. They are frequently uneducated, gross people, elected on the strength of demagogic pledges, such as promising rice for 2 Rs a kilo, a folly which at one time was draining many state's coffers, or by playing Muslims against Hindus, Harijans against Brahmins, as in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Ministers in India are most of the time ignorant, unqualified, often having no idea about the department they are overseeing - it is the civil servants who control matters, who know their subject thoroughly. You have to work hard to become a civil servant, study, pass exams, then slowly climb up the hierarchy, hereby gaining experience. The politician just jumps from being a lowly clerk, or some uneducated zamindar to become a powerful Minister, lording over much more educated men. There should be also exams to become a minister, a minimum of knowledge and skills should be required of the man who says he wants to serve the nation. It matters not if he comes from a low caste, but he should have in his heart a little bit of the selflessness of the kshatriya and a few drops of the wisdom of the brahmin.

Nobody is saying that the caste system should be praised, for it has indeed degenerated; but it would also help in enhancing India's self-pride if Indians

realised that once it constituted a unique and harmonious system. And finally, have the people who dismiss caste as an Aryan imposition on the Dravidians, or as an inhuman and nazi system, pondered the fact that it is no worse than the huge class differences you can see nowadays in South America, or even in the United States, where many Negroes live below the poverty level ? And can you really exclude it off-hand, when it still survives so much in the villages - and even in more educated circles, where one still marries in matching castes, with the help of an astrologer? Does the caste system need to be transformed, to recapture its old meaning and once more incarnate a spiritual hierarchy of beings? Or has it to be recast in a different mould, taking into account the parameters of modern Indian society? Or else, will it finally disappear altogether from India, because it has become totally irrelevant today ? At any rate, Hindus should not allow this factor to be exploited shamelessly against them, as it has been in the last two centuries, by missionaries, "secular" historians, Muslims, and by pre and post-independence Indian politicians - each for their own purpose.

4. Muslim Invasion

Another very important reason for the negative self-image that Indians have got of themselves, are the Muslim invasions. This is still today a very controversial subject, since Indian history books have chosen to keep quiet about this huge chunk of Indian history - nearly 10 centuries of horrors. At Independence, Nehru too, put it aside, perhaps because he thought that this was a topic which could divide India, as there was a strong Muslim minority which chose to stay and not emigrate to Pakistan. Yet, nothing has marked India's psyche - or the Hindu silent majority, if you wish - as the Muslim invasions. And whatever happens in contemporary India, is a consequence of these invasions, whether it is the creation of Pakistan, whether it is Kashmir, whether it is Ayodhya, or Kargil. There is no point in passing a moral judgment on these invasions, as they are a thing of the past. Islam is one of the world's youngest religions, whose dynamism is not in question; unfortunately it is a militant religion, as it believes that there is only one God and all the other Gods are false. And so as long as this concept is ingrained in the minds of Muslims, there will be a problem of tolerance, of tolerating other creeds. And this is what happened in India from the 7th century onwards : invaders, who believed in one God, came upon this country which had a million gods... And for them it was the symbol of all what they thought was wrong. So the genocide - and the word genocide has to be used - which was perpetrated was tremendous, because of the staunch

resistance of the 4000 year old Hindu faith. Indeed, the Muslim policy vis a vis India seems to have been a conscious and systematic destruction of everything that was beautiful, holy, refined. Entire cities were burnt down and their populations massacred. Each successive campaign brought hundreds of thousands of victims and similar numbers were deported as slaves. Every new invader often made literally his hill of Hindu skulls. Thus the conquest of Afghanistan in the year 1000, was followed by the annihilation of the entire Hindu population there; indeed, the region is still called Hindu Kush, 'Hindu slaughter'. The Bahmani sultans in central India, made it a rule to kill 100.000 Hindus a year. In 1399, Teimur killed 100.000 Hindus in a single day, and many more on other occasions. Historian Konraad Elst, in his book "Negationism in India", quotes Professor K.S. Lal, who calculated that the Hindu population decreased by eighty million between the year 1000 and 1525, indeed, probably the biggest holocaust in the world's history, far greater than the genocide of the Incas in South America by the Spanish and the Portuguese.

Regrettably, there was a conspiracy by the British, and later by India's Marxist intelligentsia to negate this holocaust. Thus, Indian students since the early twenties, were taught that that there never was a Muslim genocide on the person of Hindus, but rather that the Moghols brought great refinement to Indian culture. In "Communalism and the writing of Indian history", for instance, Romila Thapar, Harbans Mukhia and Bipan Chandra, professors at the JNU in New Delhi,

the Mecca of secularism and negationism in India, denied the Muslim genocide by replacing it instead with a conflict of classes : "Muslims brought the notion of egalitarianism in India", they argue. The redoubtable Romila Thapar in her "Penguin History of India", co-authored with Percival Spear, writes again : "Aurangzeb's supposed intolerance, is little more than a hostile legend based on isolated acts such as the erection of a mosque on a temple site in Benares".

What are the facts, according to Muslim records ? Aurangzeb (1658-1707) did not just build an isolated mosque on a destroyed temple, he ordered all temples destroyed an mosques to be built on their site. Among them the Kashi Vishvanath, one of the most sacred places Hindu worship, Krishna's birth temple in Mathura, the rebuilt Somnath temple on the coast of Gujurat, the Vishnu temple replaced with the Alamgir mosque now overlooking Benares and the Treta-ka-Thakur temple in Ayodhya. The number of temples destroyed by Aurangzeb is counted in 5, if not 6 figures, according to his own official court chronicles: "Aurangzeb ordered all provincial governors to destroy all schools and temples of the Pagans and to make a complete end to all pagan teachings and practices"... "Hasan Ali Khan came and said that 172 temples in the area had been destroyed"... "His majesty went to Chittor and 63 temples were destroyed"... "Abu Tarab, appointed to destroy the idol-temples of Amber, reported that 66 temples had been razed to the ground". Aurangzeb did not stop at destroying temples, their users were also wiped-out; even his own brother,

Dara Shikoh, was executed for taking an interest in Hindu religion and the Sikh Guru Tegh Bahadur was beheaded because he objected to Aurangzeb's forced conversions.

This genocide is still a reality which should not be wished away. Because what the Muslims invasions have done to India is to instil terror in the Hindu collective psyche, which still lingers many centuries later and triggers unconscious reactions. The paranoia displayed today by Indians, their indiscipline, their lack of charity for their own brethrens, the abject disregard of their environment, are a direct consequence of these invasions. What India has to do today, is to look squarely at the facts pertaining to these invasions and come to term with them, without any spirit of vengeance, so as to regain a little bit of self-pride. It would also help the Muslim community of India to acknowledge these horrors, which paradoxically, were committed against them, as they are the Hindus who were then converted by force, their women raped, their children taken into slavery - even though today they have made theirs the religion which their ancestors once hated.

5. European Colonialism

Obviously, one of the major causes for India's self-depreciating image are the European invasions. The paradox is that no country in the world as India has shown as much tolerance towards accepting in its fold persecuted religious minorities from all over the planet. Take the Jews, for instance, who have been persecuted and treated as second-class citizens everywhere after fleeing the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem. In India, not only were they welcomed, but also they were allowed to live and practise their religion peacefully, till most of them went back to Israel after Independence... But it is not only the Jews, but also the Parsis, who fled persecution by the Muslims in Iran, or the Christian Syrians, who landed in India in the 3rd century, or the Arab merchants who from time immemorial were allowed to establish trading posts in Kerala... Or even the Jesuits, who were welcomed when they landed with Vasco de Gama in Calicut in 1495. But, as the Syrian Christians, as the Arab merchants, they quickly turned against their benefactors and set not only to exploit India commercially, but also attempted to impose their own religions on the "Heathens", the Pagans, the Infidels.

It is thus a bit of a paradox when one hears today Indian intellectuals claim that Hindus are intolerant, fanatic, or "fundamentalists". Because in the whole history of India, Hindus have not only shown that they are extremely tolerant, but Hinduism is probably the only religion in the world who never tried to convert

others - forget about conquering other countries to propagate their own religion. This is not true with Christianity, it is not true with Islam - it is not even true with Buddhism, as Buddhists had missionaries who went all over Asia and converted people. This historical tolerance of Hinduism is never taken into account by foreign correspondents covering India and even by Indian journalists. If it was, Indians might at least take some pride in their country's boundless generosity towards others... Indians have a very short memory of themselves, maybe because they never cared to write down their own history.

Thus, this beautiful tolerance was taken advantage off by numerous invaders - particularly Europeans colonisers. The Portuguese for instance, were allowed to establish trading posts in the 15th century by the Zamorin of Cochin. And what did they do? Alfonso de Albuquerque started a reign of terror in Goa, razing temples to erect churches in their stead, burning "heretics", crucifying Brahmins, using false theories to forcibly convert the lower castes and encouraging his soldiers to take Indian mistresses. Later, the British missionaries in India were always supporters of colonialism; they encouraged it and their whole structure was based on "the good Western civilised world being brought to the Pagans". In the words of Claudius Buccchanan, a chaplain attached to the East India Company : "...Neither truth, nor honesty, honour, gratitude, nor charity, is to be found in the breast of a Hindoo"... What a comment about a nation that gave the world the Vedas and the Upanishads ! After the

failed mutiny of 1857, the missionaries became even more militant, using the secular arm of the British Raj, who felt that the use of the sword at the service of the Gospel, was now entirely justified, so that at Independence, entire regions of the north-east were converted to Christianity. Remember how Swami Vivekananda cried in anguish at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago: "if we Hindus dig out all the dirt from the bottom of the Pacific Ocean and throw it in you faces, it will be but a speck compared to what the missionaries have done to our religion and culture "".

In the late nineties, Indian Christians complained about persecutions by Hindus "zealots". It is true that there happened two or three crimes, particularly a ghastly murder against an Australian missionary and his two young sons. But the massive outcry it evoked in the Indian Press showed clearly how Indians are constantly denying themselves and consider the life of a White Man infinitely more important and dear than the lives of a hundred Indians. Or to put it differently : the life of a Christian seems to them more sacred than the lives of many Hindus, which shows how the White Man's presence in India still has such an impact. Because when Hindus were slaughtered, whether in Pendjab in the eighties, or in Kashmir in the nineties, when militants would stop buses and kill all the Hindus - men, women and children, when the few last courageous Hindus to dare remain in Kashmir, were savagely slaughtered in a village, very few voices were raised in the Indian Press - at least there never was

such an outrage as provoked by the murder of the Australian missionary.

At long last, Hindus are beginning to realize the harm done by missionaries to their social and cultural fabric. Yet even today, one still hears of covert attempts at conversion by Christian missionaries. In the poor districts of Kerala for example, missionaries still use the " miracle " ploy to convert people : the naive drops a " wish " in a box placed at the entrance of church. And lo, this wish - a loan, some cloths, a boat - is miraculously granted a few days later. Needless to say that the happy innocent converts quickly, bringing along his whole family. It is also this meekness of the Hindus towards the Christians, as if the British missionaries had permanently left an imprint of inferiority in the collective psyche of Indians, which contributes towards India's self-denial. And let us not forget that Pope John Paul II proclaimed that Asia will be the target of Evangelisation in the Third Millennium.

6. Macaulay's Children

When they took over India, the British set upon establishing an intermediary race of Indians, whom they could entrust with their work at the middle level echelons and who could one day be convenient instruments to rule by proxy, or semi-proxy. The tool to shape these " British clones " was education. In the words of Macaulay, the " pope " of British schooling in India: " We must at present do our best to form a class, who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern; a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellects ". Macaulay had very little regard for Hindu culture and education : " all the historical information which can be collected from all the books which have been written in the Sanskrit language, is less valuable than what may be found in the most paltry abridgement used at preparatory schools in England ". Or : " Hindus have a literature of small intrinsic value, hardly reconcilable with morality, full of monstrous superstitions "...

It seems today that India's Marxist and Muslim intelligentsia could not agree more with Macaulay, for his dream has come true: nowadays, the greatest adversaries of an " indianised and spiritualised education " are the descendants of these " Brown Shahibs " : the " secular " politicians, the journalists, the top bureaucrats, in fact the whole westernised cream of India. And what is even more paradoxical, is

that most of them are Hindus ! It is they, who upon getting independence, have denied India its true identity and borrowed blindly from the British education system, without trying to adapt it to the unique Indian mentality and psychology; and it is they who are refusing to accept a change of India's education system, which is totally western-oriented and is churning out machines learning by heart boring statistics which are of little usefulness in life. And what India is getting from this education is a youth which apes the West : they go to Mac Donald's, thrive on MTV culture, wear the latest Klein jeans and Lacoste T Shirts, and in general are useless, rich parasites, in a country which has so many talented youngsters who live in poverty. They will grow-up like millions of other western clones in the developing world, who wear a tie, read the New York Times and swear by liberalism and secularism to save their countries from doom. In time, they will reach elevated positions and write books and articles which make fun of India, they will preside human-right committees, be "secular" high bureaucrats who take the wrong decisions and generally do tremendous harm to India, because it has been programmed in their genes to always run down their own country. In a gist, they will be the ones who are always looking at the West for approval and forever perceive India through the western prism. It is said that a nation has to be proud of itself to move forward - and unless there is a big change in this intellectual elite, unless it is more conscious of its heritage and of India's greatness, which has begun to happen in a small way,

it is going to be very difficult for India to enter the 21st century as a real super power.

Thus the education curriculum has to be totally revised. For instance, Indian history is still taught as it was devised by western scholars and it promotes blindly theories such as the Aryan Invasion, which probably never happened. On the other hand, students learn practically nothing about the extraordinary genius of their culture. Studies of the Vedas, for example, should be made compulsory from the seventh grade upwards, because, as Sri Aurobindo remarked : "the Veda was the beginning of our spiritual knowledge, the Veda will remain its end. The recovery of the perfect truth of the Veda is therefore not merely a desideratum for our modern intellectual curiosity, but a practical necessity for the future of the human race. For I firmly believe that the secret concealed in the Veda, when entirely discovered, will be found to formulate perfectly that knowledge and practice of divine life to which the march of humanity, after long wanderings in the satisfaction of the intellect and senses, must inevitably return." (India's Rebirth, p.94). Indian children should be told about the immense human and spiritual values of their own literature, like we in Europe are brought up on the values of the Iliad and the Odyssey, or the great Greek tragedies. Therefore, education in India has to be more indianised - it is not a question of being "nationalistic", or "saffron-oriented", as Indian Marxists are fond of saying, but of knowing one's own culture : the Vedas, the Bhagavad Gita, the Ramayana, which

according to many western scholars stand among the greatest literary works ever written.

Of course, Indian students have to be geared-up for the competitive world, because unless you can deal on par with the West, unless you can speak fluently English, in order to do business and interact, you cannot compete, you cannot become a great nation. Therefore, the best of western education has to be imparted, as Sri Aurobindo had clearly indicated : "National education...may be described as the education which starting with the past and making full use of the present, builds up a great nation. Whoever wishes to cut of the nation from its past, is no friend of our national growth. Whoever fails to take advantage of the present, is losing us the battle of life. We must therefore save for India all that she has stored up of knowledge, character and noble thoughts in her immemorial past. We must acquire for her the best knowledge that Europe can give her and assimilate it to her own peculiar type of national temperament. We must introduce the best methods of teaching humanity has developed, whether modern or ancient. And all these we must harmonise into a system which will be impregnated with the spirit of self-reliance, so as to build up men and not machines". (India's Reb 36). Then India will produce generation after generation of children who are proud of their own countries and do not go about negating themselves.

7. The Partition of the Subcontinent

The first leaders of pre-independent India took some disastrous decisions, and the worst of them was to allow the division of their own country on religious lines. And today, the consequences of this partition are still felt : Kashmir is the most visible of them; but you also have Ayodhya, Kargil, the nuclear bomb, the Bombay or Coimbatore blasts - and above all, the self-negation of a nation which is not whole, which has lost some of its most precious limbs in 1947. Yes, it is true, the British used to the hilt the existing divide between Hindus and Muslims; yes, the Congress was weak : it accepted what was forced down its throat by Jinnah and Mountbatten, even though many of its leaders, and a few moderate Muslims, disagreed with the principle of partition; it was also Gandhi's policy of non-violence and gratifying the fanatical Muslim minority, in the hope that it would see the light, which did tremendous harm to India and encouraged Jinnah to harden his demands. But ultimately, one has to go back to the roots, to the beginning of it all, in order to understand Partition. One has to travel back in history to get a clear overall picture. This is why memory is essential, this is why Holocausts should never be forgotten.

For Jinnah was only the vehicle, the instrument, the avatar, the latest reincarnation of the medieval Muslims coming down to rape and loot and plunder the land of Bharat. He was the true son of Mahmud Ghaznavi, of Muhammed Ghasi, of Aurangzeb. He took up again the work left unfinished by the last Mughal

two centuries earlier: 'Dar-ul-Islam', the House of Islam. The Hindu-Muslim question is an old one - but is it really a Muslim-Hindu question, or just plainly a Muslim obsession, their hatred of the Hindu pagans, their contempt for this polytheist religion? This obsession, this hate, is as old as the first invasion of India by the Arabs in 650. After independence, nothing has changed: the sword of Allah is still as much ready to strike the Kafirs, the idolaters of many Gods. The Muslims invaded this country, conquered it, looted it, razed its temples, humiliated its Hindu leaders, killed its Brahmins, converted its weaker sections. True, it was all done in the name of Allah and many of its chiefs were sincere in thinking they were doing their duty by hunting down the Infidel. So how could they accept on 15th August 1947 to share power on an equal basis with those who were their subjects for thirteen centuries? "Either the sole power for ourselves, and our rule over the Hindus as it is our sovereign right, we the adorers of the one and only true God - Or we quit India and establish our own nation, a Muslim nation, of the true faith, where we will live amongst ourselves".

Thus there is no place for idolaters in this country, this great nation of Pakistan; they can at best be 'tolerated' as second-class citizens. Hence the near total exodus of Hindus from Pakistan, whereas more than half the Muslim population in India, chose to stay, knowing full well that they would get the freedom to be and to practice their own religion. In passing, the Muslims took their pound of flesh from the Hindus - once more - by indulging in terrible massacres, which

were followed by retaliations from Sikhs and hard core Hindus, the ultimate horror. Partition triggered one of the most terrible exodus in the history of humanity. And this exodus has not ended: they still come by hundreds of thousand every year from Bangladesh, fleeing poverty, flooding India with problems, when the country has already so many of her own.

For French historian Alain Danielou, the division of India was on the human level as well as on the political one, a great mistake : "It added to the Middle East an unstable state, Pakistan, and burdened India which already had serious problems". And he adds: "India whose ancient borders stretched until Afghanistan, lost with the country of seven rivers (the Indus Valley), the historical centre of her civilisation. At a time when the Muslim invaders seemed to have lost some of their extremism and were ready to assimilate themselves to other populations of India, the European conquerors, before returning home, surrendered once more the cradle of Hindu civilisation to Muslim fanaticism." (Histoire de l'Inde, p.355)

Pakistanis will argue that the valley of Kashmir, which has a Muslim majority, should have gone to Pakistan - and in the mad logic of partition they are not totally wrong. It is because Nehru and Gandhi accepted this logic, which was tremendously stupid, that India is suffering so much today. Of course, we cannot go back, History has been made : Pakistan has become an independent country and it is a "fait accompli". But if you go to Pakistan today, you will notice that its

Punjabis look exactly the same as Indian Punjabis : they have the same mannerisms, eat the same food, dress similarly, speak the same language... Everything unites them, except religion. And this is what Sri Aurobindo kept saying in 1947 : " India is free, but she has not achieved unity, only a fissured and broken freedom...The whole communal division into Hindu and Muslim seems to have hardened into the figure of a permanent political division of the country. It is to be hoped that the Congress and the Nation will not accept the settled fact as for ever settled, or as anything more than a temporary expedient. For if it lasts, India may be seriously weakened, even crippled; civil strife may remain always possible, possible even a new invasion and foreign conquest. The partition of the country must go...For without it the destiny of India might be seriously impaired and frustrated. That must not be." (Message of Sri Aurobindo on the 15th of August 1947). It is only when the subcontinent will be whole again and the scars on both sides have been healed, that a Greater India will regain some of the self-pride gone with Partition.

8. The Humiliation of 1962

The so-called Kargil war of Kashmir in June 99 has triggered two very positive phenomenons for India. For the first time in a long stretch, it gave the country a bit of nationalism, it made many Indians proud of the heroism and selflessness of their soldiers. Whatever jingoism, or chauvinism there also was, one could feel, from Tamil Nadu to Punjab, that for a time there grew a feeling of togetherness in the nation, the knowledge of one's soldiers fighting it out there, in the harshest and most dangerous conditions and defending Mother India's sacred land. And that was very positive, for unless a nation possesses a bit of nationalism, it cannot keep on growing. And the second very positive aspect is that it has revived in India a notion which has been extinct for a long time : that of the kshatriya spirit. A nation needs warriors, it needs soldiers to defend itself and protect its women, children, and its borders from hostile and asuric elements, which throughout history have negated the Good and the Holy. It is fine to be Gandhian and non-violent, but in the tough and rough world of today, one cannot be too naive : you need a strong and well-equipped army to be able to defend one's dharma. But a well equipped army is not enough - we have seen how today the United States' army, the most modern and high-tech of the world, is only capable of fighting from a distance, either bombarding from the sky, or shooting from boats off-shore, a coward's war, as its soldiers have lost the sense of kshatriya, of honour, of dying for one's country. In

Kargil, India saw the selflessness of its soldiers, with all the officers in front, climbing in the cold under enemy fire and wrestling peaks in impossible conditions, with little more than blood and tears.

But not only Indians lack self-confidence in their dealings with the West, but they seem to have a permanent fear of the Chinese. Is it because in 1962, the Chinese took advantage of India's naivete, and attacked treacherously in the Himalayas, humiliating the Indian army and taking away 20.000 square kilometres of her territory, which they have not yet vacated ? India's first Prime Minister, Jawarlahal Nehru, had decided that India and China were the natural 'socialist' brothers of Asia. Shortly before China's attack, the Indian Army Chief of Staff had drafted a paper on the threats to India's security by China, along with recommendations for a clear defence policy. But whe n Nehru read the paper, he said : "Rubbish. Total Rubbish. We don't need a defence plan. Our policy is non-violence. We foresee no military threats.. Scrap the Army. The police are good enough to meet our security needs." We know the results of this very foolish assessment.

But the biggest mistake that Nehru did was to betray Tibet, a peaceful spiritualised nation. For Tibet had always been a natural buffer between the two Giants of Asia - in fact, the Dalai Lama's repeated offer that Tibet becomes a denuclearised, demilitarised zone between India and China, makes total sense today and Indian leaders should have immediately adopted it. But

unfortunately, if there is one thing which all political parties in India share, it is the policy of appeasing China in exchange for a non-interference of the Chinese in Kashmir. But what non-interference ? Not only did China give Pakistan the know-how to develop nuclear weapons, but it also provided missiles to deliver them ! On top of that, according to the CIA, China has transferred one third of its nuclear arsenal to Nagchuka, 250 kms away from Lhassa, a region full of huge caves, which the Chinese have linked together by an intricate underground network and where they have installed nearly one hundred Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, many of them pointed at Indian cities. The reason for this is that the Chinese, who are probably among the most intelligent people in the world, have always understood that India is their number one potential enemy in Asia - in military, nuclear and economic terms.

It should be clear that as long as India does not stand-up up to its responsibility towards Tibet and continues to recognise China's unjust suzerainty of it, there will be no peace in Asia. Indian leaders are perfectly aware that the Chinese, a span of fifty years, have killed 1,2 million Tibetans, razed to the ground 6254 monasteries, destroyed 60% of religious, historical and cultural archives and that one Tibetan out of ten is still in jail. As we enter the Third Millennium, a quarter million Chinese troops are occupying Tibet and there are 7.5 million Chinese settlers for six million Tibetans - in fact, in many places such as the capital, Lhassa, Tibetans are outnumbered two to one... India

has also to wake-up to the plain fact that China needs space and has hegemonic aspirations : it got Tibet, it got Hong Kong, it got part of Ladhak; now it wants Taiwan, Arunachal Pradesh, the Spratly islands and what not ! Fifty years ago, during the Korean war, Sri Aurobindo, had seen clearly in the Chinese game : "the first move in the Chinese Communist plan of campaign is to dominate and take possession first of these northern parts and then of South East Asia as a preliminary to their manoeuvres with regard to the rest of the continent in passing Tibet as a gate opening to India". India should overcome its awe of China and be ready to eventually face once more the Chinese army. The nuclear tests of India, which have been very criticised, because ideally you have to get rid of nuclear weapons if you want a safe world, should be seen in that light.

9. A Westernised Framework

It is not only the British education system, which was blindly adopted at Independence by Nehru, but also the whole judicial, constitutional, and legal set-up. The Constitution, for instance, has repeatedly shown its flaws, as the Presidents, who has no real powers, are playing more and more games and trying to impinge upon the Prime Minister's prerogatives. Democracy in India has also been perverted : we have seen how the Congress, who in the last three elections of the century made disastrous showings, has used the subtleties of the system to bring down four successive governments, thus provoking useless and expensive elections, which in turn threw no stable governments until the National Democratic Alliance won by a landslide in 1999. Therefore, it is the whole democratic system of India that has to be reshaped to suit a new, truer nation, which will manifest again its ancient wisdom.

And what is true democracy for India, but the law of Dharma ? It is this law that has to be revived, it is this law that must be the foundation of a true democratic India: "It has been said that democracy is based on the rights of man; it has been replied that it should rather take its stand on the duties of man; but both rights and duties are European ideas. Dharma is the Indian conception in which rights and duties lose the artificial antagonism created by a view of the world which makes selfishness the root of action and regain their deep and eternal unity. Dharma is the basis of

democracy which Asia must recognise, for in this lies the distinction between the soul of Asia and the soul of Europe." (India's Reb p.37- March 16th 1908)

And the most wonderful thing is that, practically, India has at hand the model of a new form of democracy in the old Panchayat system of Indian villages, which has to be revived and worked up to the top. These ancient Panchayat system and their guilds were very representative and they had a living contact with the people. On the other hand, the parliamentary system has lost contact with the masses : the MP elected from Tamil Nadu or Andhra Pradesh, sits most of his time in Delhi, an artificial, arrogant and faraway city. The palatial bungalow, the car, the servants, the sycophancy, the temptation to get corrupt he encounters there, make him forget his original aspiration to serve the people - if he ever had one...What has to be done is not only to decentralize the Government, by giving a greater autonomy to the states - which should take care of most separatist movements - but also to send back the elected politicians to their fields of work, so that they have a living contact with their people, as they did two thousand years ago : " We had a spontaneous and a free growth of communities developing on their own lines...Each such communal form of life - the village, the town, etc. - which formed the unit of national life, was left free in its own internal management. The central authority never interfered with it... because its function was not so much to legislate as to harmonise

and see that everything was going all right"... (India's Rebirth 172)

The Judiciary, with its millions of backlog cases, which sometimes take decades to be decided upon, with its lawyers looking like crows in these ridiculous black dresses, would have to be reviewed too. It would be absurd to put back the Manu law into practice; but certainly the law of Dharma, of Truth, should be translated into a new Judicial system. Not to judge according to Western standards, with its so-called secular values, which have no relevance to India : " The work of the legislators attempted to take up the ordinary life of man and of the community and the life of human desire and aim and interest and ordered rule and custom and to interpret and formulate it in the same complete and decisive manner and at the same time to throw the whole in to an ordered relation to the ruling ideas of the national culture and frame and perpetuate a social system intelligently fashioned so as to provide a basis, a structure, a gradation by which there could be a secure evolution of the life from the vital and mental, to the spiritual motive.. " (Found of Indian Culture p. 283).

India has no national language, as Nehru thought that English could be the unifying language. But barely 10% of India knows English fluently and Hindi is spoken only in the North. Yet, very few seems to realise that India possesses in Sanskrit the Mother of all languages, so intricate, so subtle, so rich, that no other speech can equal it today. It could easily become the unifying

language of India : "Sanskrit ought still to have a future as the language of the learned and it will not be a good day for India when the ancient tongues cease entirely to be written or spoken", admonished 50 years ago Sri Aurobindo, A dead language, you say ! Impossible to revive? But that's what they argued about Hebrew. And did not the Jewish people, when they got back their land in 1948, revive their 'dead' language, so that it is spoken today by all Jewish people and has become alive again ? The same thing ought to be done with Sanskrit, but as Sri Aurobindo points out: "it must get rid of the curse of the heavy pedantic style contracted by it in its decline, with the lumbering impossible compounds and the overweight of hair-splitting erudition". Let the scholars begin now to revive and modernise the Sanskrit language, it would be a sure sign of the dawning of the Renaissance of India. In a few years it should be taught as the second language in schools throughout the country, with the regional language as the first and English as the third. On top of that, Sanskrit would be a gift to the world, because it will boost the studies of the Vedas, whose great secrets will be unravelled. And again, this will go in enhancing India's self image.

10. Arise Again O Ancient India

"Arise O India, be proud once more of Thyself", one would be tempted to say in conclusion. This should be India's motto for the Third Millennium, after five centuries of self-denial. For, in spite of its poverty, in spite of the false Aryan invasion, in spite of the Muslim holocaust, in spite of European colonialism, in spite of Macaulay's children, in spite of the Partition, in spite of the Chinese threat, in spite of the westernised framework, India still has got tremendous potential. Everything is there, ready to be manifested again, ready to mould India in a new modern nation, a super power of the 21st century. Of course, India has to succeed its industrialisation, it has to liberalise, because unless you can compete economically with the West, no nation can become a super power. India has also to solve its political problems, settle its separatist troubles, get rid of corruption and bureaucracy. And lastly, it has to apply quickly its mind and genius to its ecological problems, because the environment in India is in a very bad way, near the point of no-return. Thus, if India can succeed into its industrialisation and liberalisation, become a force to be reckoned militarily, economically and socially, then the wonder that IS India could again manifest itself.

And what is this Wonder? Beyond the image of poverty, of backwardness, beyond even the wonder that is Hinduism, there is a Knowledge - spiritual, occult, esoteric, medical even - still alive today in India.

This Knowledge was once roaming upon the shores of this world - in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece... - but it has now vanished to be replaced by religions, with their dogmas and rituals, do's and don't, hells and heavens. For we have lost the truth. we have lost the Great Sense, the meaning of our evolution, the meaning of why so much suffering, why dying, why getting born, why this earth, who are we, what is the soul, what is reincarnation, where is the ultimate truth about the world, the universe... But India has kept this truth, India has managed to preserve it through seven millenniums of pitfalls, of genocides and attempts at killing her santanam dharma. And this will be India's gift to this planet during the next century: to restore to the world its true sense. to recharge humanity with the real meaning and spirit of life, to gift to this dolorous Planet That which is beyond mind : the Supra-Mental. India will become the spiritual leader of the world : "It is this religion that I am raising-up before the world, it is this that I have perfected and developed through the Rishis, Saints, and Avatars, and now it is going forth to do my work among the nations. I am raising forth this nation to send forth my word...When therefore it is said that India shall rise, it is the Santana Dharma that shall rise, it is the Santana Dharma that shall be great. When it is said that India shall expand and extend herself, it is the Santana Dharma that shall expand and extend itself over the world. It is for the Dharma and by the Dharma that India exists". (India's Reb. p. 46 -Uttara speech)

This knowledge does not necessarily reside in mystical realms, as it can be very practical. Ayurveda for instance, the oldest medical science still in practise, but which is unfortunately now being neglected. As a result, American companies are patenting medicines using the properties of neem or haldi, which were known 4000 years ago by India's forefathers. As in the case of Sanskrit, the Indian Government should put its energies and resources towards the reviving of Ayurveda, so that India is not totally swamped by allopathic medicine, which is controlled by multinationals. Or pranayama, the science of breathing. It is a very practical, down to earth knowledge and its effects have been studied for thousands of years. Indian teachers know exactly what results will this type - or that type - of exercise have on you and what kind of routine you should do to improve that particular problem, or develop this certain faculty in you. Pranayama is probably the best suited Indian yogic discipline for the West, because it is so down to earth, so scientific - there are no miracles, no levitation, no smoky mysticism and everything can be explained in a rational way. And again, the U.S.A., always prompt to experience new techniques, is using this knowledge : quite a few American companies have included exercises of pranayama in the peps sessions of their executives; sportsmen too are experimenting with it to improve their performances, as the film " the Great Blue ", has shown when the hero does a series of breathing exercises known in India as " Viloma ", to store as much air as possible in his lungs, before breaking a world record in underwater diving without

oxygen. Then you have meditation, the queen all of yogic disciplines, which is being practised more and more in the West, as there have been numerous scientific studies, which have shown the positive effect of meditation on heart problems, psychological stress or blood circulation.

The irony of it all is that not only most of the Indian upper class and intellectual elite does not practise meditation and pranayama, or gets treated for its problems with Ayurveda, but that none of these things are included in the schools and universities curriculum. So you have this wonderful knowledge, which has disappeared from the rest of the world, but if you go to cities like Delhi, or Bombay, you realise that most of the youth there have no idea about meditation, or have never heard of pranayama. They are totally cut off from their ancient culture, from the greatness of their tradition, and even look down on it. So unless Indians start taking pride in their own culture, India will never be able to gift it to the world.

Famous French writer Andre Malraux had said that unless the 21 century is spiritual, then it will not be. What he meant was that the world has now come to such a stage of unhappiness, of material dryness, of conflicts within itself, that it seems doomed and there appears no way that it can redeem Itself : it is just going towards self-destruction, - ecologically, socially, spiritually. So unless the 21st century allows a new spiritual order to take over - not a religious order,

because religion has been a failure, all over the world - then the world is going towards pralaya. And India holds the key to the world's future, for India is the only nation which still preserves in the darkness of Her Himalayan caves, on the luminous ghats of Benares, in the hearts of her countless yogis, or even in the minds of her ordinary folk, the key to the planetary evolution, its future and its hope.

The 21st century then, will be the era of the East; this is where the sun is going to rise again, after centuries of decadence and submission to Western colonialism; this is where the focus of the world is going to shift. And as when India used to shine and send forth Her Dharma all over the Orient: to Japan, Thailand, China, Burma, or Cambodia and influence their civilisations and religions for centuries to come, once more She will emit Her light and radiate, Queen among nations: "India of the ages is not dead nor has She spoken Her last creative word; She lives and has still something to do for Herself and the human peoples. And that which She must seek now to awake, is not an anglicised oriental people, docile pupil of the West and doomed to repeat the cycle of the Occident's success and failure, but still the ancient immemorial Shakti recovering Her deepest self, lifting Her head higher towards the supreme source of light and strength and turning to discover the complete meaning and vaster form of Her Dharma".

Then, India's Self-Denial will be done with forever…

About the Author



Francois Gautier, born in Paris in 1950, is a French journalist and writer, who is the political correspondent in India and South Asia for "Le Figaro", France's largest circulation newspaper. He is married to an Indian and has lived in India for the past 29 years, which has helped him to see through the usual cliches and prejudices on India, (to which he subscribed for a long time), as most foreign (and sometimes, unfortunately, Indian) journalists, writers and historians do. He shuttles between Delhi and the international city of Auroville near Pondichery.

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